

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2016 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [X] Title I    [ ] Charter    [ ] Magnet    [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Ms. Yolanda Heidelberg

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Jackson Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3925 Wales Road

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Memphis                      State TN                      Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 38108-2177

County Shelby County

Telephone (901) 416-4222                      Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Web site/URL

<http://www.scsk12.org/schools/jackson.es/site/index.shtml>

E-mail heidelbergyy@scsk12.org

Twitter Handle \_\_\_\_\_ Facebook Page \_\_\_\_\_ Google+ \_\_\_\_\_

YouTube/URL \_\_\_\_\_ Blog \_\_\_\_\_ Other Social Media Link \_\_\_\_\_

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*Mr. Dorsey Hopson                      E-mail mcs\_supt@scsk12.org

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Shelby County School                      Tel. (901) 416-5300

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Ms. Teresa Jones

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## Part I – Eligibility Certification

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2010 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2015-2016) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 99 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 28 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 31 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 158 TOTAL

### SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
  - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
  - Suburban
  - Small city or town in a rural area
  - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2015 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
<b>PreK</b>	13	7	20
<b>K</b>	22	28	50
<b>1</b>	26	29	55
<b>2</b>	38	28	66
<b>3</b>	28	26	54
<b>4</b>	24	33	57
<b>5</b>	28	28	56
<b>6</b>	0	0	0
<b>7</b>	0	0	0
<b>8</b>	0	0	0
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12 or higher</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	179	179	358

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 1 % Asian
  - 24 % Black or African American
  - 70 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 3 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 2 % White
  - 0 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2014 – 2015 school year: 16%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	31
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	32
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	63
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	400
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.158
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	16

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 36 %  
130 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Spanish

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 100 %  
Total number students who qualify: 358

8. Students receiving special education services: 10 %  
35 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- 3 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 0 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 4 Other Health Impaired
- 8 Specific Learning Disability
- 16 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 4 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 15
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	19
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	9
Paraprofessionals	5
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	8

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 19:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	94%	94%	95%	94%	95%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**  
Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2015.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.  
Yes  No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

Our mission is to provide opportunities for students to learn skills, acquire knowledge, and develop character within a diverse, nurturing, learning environment.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

## PART III – SUMMARY

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Jackson Elementary School serves a diverse community. It is a neighborhood school located in the Raleigh area of North Memphis. A small, public park adjoins the school property and is available for use during school hours. There are 20 classrooms, a computer lab, library, cafeteria, and four portable classrooms. Since its inception in 1957, Jackson has seen many changes in its demographics. When the school opened, the student body was majority middle class Caucasian. In the 1980's, Catholic Charities, striving to help displaced refugee families, brought Africans and Eastern Europeans into the Jackson community. Eventually, these groups migrated throughout the city, changing the landscape from middle to lower class African-Americans. Over time, these inhabitants decreased, and the lower socioeconomic class of Caucasians increased. Along with seeing its first African American principal, there was a rise in the number of Hispanic families moving into the community. In 2001, the school had the largest Hispanic student population in the district. Currently, we are a Title I, school and our demographics are 70% Hispanic, 24% African American, and 6% other. Notwithstanding the obstacles that poverty that can bring about, the school proudly recognizes former students on "Jackson's Wall of Fame" who have overcome many challenges, proceeded to graduate from college, and now lead successful lives. We are prideful in the assertion that our zip code does not determine success!

Our philosophical approach is to ensure that the social, intellectual, physical, and emotional growth of every child is supported in literacy, numeracy, social sciences, and technology. This ideology provides students with an opportunity to develop life skills so that they will become productive citizens. In addition, our goal is to comply with our school district's strategic plan, Destination 2025, which is designed to guarantee that students are college or career ready by year 2025.

The faculty offers numerous pathways for students to achieve success. We provide engaging lessons that reach all students at their present levels of performance. Within professional learning communities (PLCs), teachers collaborate to develop quality instruction, create assessments, and analyze student data. Educators increase their own knowledge through online coursework, as well as professional development (PD) sessions. Vertical teams discuss the alignment of curriculum standards. Administrators evaluate educators frequently to verify that instruction is intentional and effective.

A variety of programs and initiatives are employed to increase the well-being of the whole child. Dolly Parton's 'Books from Birth' program is available to support students' families in a relentless mission of fostering early literacy skills. Through a partnership with a local dentist office, dental services, information and products are provided to families. A local church distributes weekend food bags, holiday meals, and bicycles to students and their families. An affiliation with a local hospital aids in offering healthcare information, nutrition, and free services to parents and students. An array of services provided for students also include special education, English as a Second Language program, an after-school childcare program, and One Child at a Time tutoring service. Some family events that help strengthen the home-school connection include Family Math and Reading Day, Family Data Analysis Meetings, and Hispanic Heritage Festival. Students have counseling classes to promote the awareness of bullying, efficacy, and character trait building within the school environment. Counseling classes are offered to the parents and the community monthly. The local police department conducts D.A.R.E. lessons for fifth grade students.

In keeping with our philosophy, we strive to support our students' physical and emotional needs by teaching students how to be safe. The staff participates in online safety refresher courses, attends first-aid workshops, receives active shooter training for hostile scenarios, and regularly conducts school-wide emergency drills. The school uses surveillance cameras, the A-phone/buzzer monitoring system, and keyless swipe cards which are used by all faculty and staff members. Visitors to the school must be buzzed in and report to the office to receive a visitor's badge.

Jackson boasts having 100% of its teachers Highly Qualified. We have met the AdvancED Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools and earned the overall assessment level of “Highly Functional”. In 2006, the school received the Value-Added Achievement Award and was regarded as a Highly Effective School. Historically, Jackson has maintained a superior "Level 5" TVAAS (Tennessee Value Added Assessment System) status. In 2012, Jackson was recognized as a Tennessee Reward School. In 2015, the school board acknowledged our upward-trending results by honoring our principal as an Outstanding Achievement School Leader for guiding Jackson to academic success with a continuity of leadership that was publicized through local media.

## PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Core Curriculum:

Our main goal at Jackson Elementary is student achievement. The curriculum is based on state academic standards and classroom instruction design using district pacing guides. We supplement the program through careful research and consideration of particular student accommodations. Statistical data is used to place students in tiers that best meet their individual needs. Students performing more than a grade level behind receive a daily 30-minute computer-assisted intervention and assistance from community tutors. Students above grade level, attend classes in a setting that matches their instructional level. For example, a second grade student functioning on a third to fourth grade level would be placed into a third grade classroom for reading instruction. To ensure students are prepared for college and career demands, the school implements a daily 90-minute reading block. During this time, reading, writing, listening, and speaking areas are addressed. Students use accountable talk as they analyze challenging text. The five essential components of reading: phonics, phonemic awareness, comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency are the basis of our reading program. Classrooms provide a print rich environment with word walls and labels to stimulate language acquisition. Teachers extend literacy strategies including close reading and meaningful discourse of complex texts. Technology is embedded throughout the curriculum. The school purchased interactive white boards for every classroom teacher, which are used on a daily basis by teachers and students.

The first 30 minutes of each day is spent on math tasks whereby students create visual models to represent the problem, discuss various strategies to solve the constructs, present and compare multiple solutions, and justify their answers. Every student receives 75 minutes of math instruction daily using differentiation and flexible grouping. Students have multiple opportunities to cement fundamental and fluency skills, including Calendar Math and math journals. During transition times, such as waiting in lines, students review numeracy facts. We galvanize the strengths of our support teachers as they incorporate math and other disciplines into their curriculum. These activities assist us in closing the achievement gap.

The science curriculum is based on educational pedagogy and state standards. Science lends itself to the incorporation of core content. Students read complex texts and engage in rich discussions and text dependent questioning. Students are engaged in the scientific process and STEM activities. Our annual Mad Scientist Day allows students to experiment and explore.

The social studies curriculum encompasses history, economics, and geography. Teachers extract text-dependent questions from primary sources to assure students are engaged in complex text. Literacy is embedded in the social studies curriculum. Students gain knowledge and skills through task-based learning. Cultural projects assist in nurturing diversity awareness, collaboration, and developing communication skills.

Our goal to strengthen early literacy begins with our preschool classroom for children who are four years old. This program focuses on school readiness in the areas of physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development. The state early childhood standards are used as a basis for the program and are built upon until grade three. The classroom provides a child-centered literacy program in a safe and nurturing environment that fosters a cooperative partnership between home and school. The curriculum is based on foundational skills. Calendar Math and Morning Message are daily routines that incorporate several concepts in literacy, numeracy, and social sciences. Phonological awareness and letter recognition are taught in many areas such as songs and games. Writing is another intricate component that builds readiness skills. Journals are used to allow the emergent writers to progress and experiment with writing through daily exploration and teacher modeling. According to anecdotal records from kindergarten teachers, the program has proven to have an impact on school readiness and success. We affirm, based on data tracking, that students exposed to prekindergarten increase their academic gains.

## 2. Other Curriculum Areas:

In order to support the acquisition of essential skills and knowledge, all students in kindergarten through fifth grade participate in weekly classes in the areas of library, Orff music, art, guidance, and physical education. In addition, these specialists provide intentional tutoring in core content areas to aid in closing the achievement gap.

To provide a solid foundation that will last a lifetime, students at Jackson work on independent reading and learn how to search and locate books in the library. Students have access to the library through weekly classes and during early morning open check out time. We use TRAILS (Tools for Real-time Assessment of Information Literacy Skills) assessments to target areas of instruction and evaluate skills in grades three through five. The library website ([jacksoneslibrary.weebly.com](http://jacksoneslibrary.weebly.com)) provides a safe starting place for Internet research while building digital literacy. We offer enrichment opportunities for students to expand knowledge and explore different areas. For example, students view and examine traveling exhibits and artifacts from a local history and natural science museum. Our librarian coordinates the annual book fair, spelling bee, Read for the Record event, Curiosity Day, and Read across America Celebration. She works with the public library to provide applications for library cards, as well as sign-up opportunities for the highly regarded "Books from Birth" program.

Orff music classes engage learners individually and collectively through class work and choral opportunities. To achieve the goal of musical literacy, students learn to play a variety of Orff instruments, sing songs from many cultures, styles, and time periods, understand the basics of music theory, and broaden their appreciation of many musical genres. Scholars perform at holiday celebrations during the year, and our chorus (open to fourth and fifth graders) provides musical entertainment at other school events. Our music specialist supports the social studies curriculum from a unique perspective. History comes alive when fourth graders learn about Native American music and instruments. Studying Negro spirituals in music class helps fifth grade students to understand the plight of slaves in pre-Civil War days.

Art instruction involves the learner in a kinesthetic way that connects body and mind in support of the whole child. The slogan "Art happens here" is on the window of the art room. Inside, students work creatively using a wide variety of media, from crayons and colored pencils to beads and cardboard tubes. Students have their work exhibited at district-level art shows and have won local area contests. Artwork adorns the hallways and even our stairs. The art teacher has painted each set of steps to support a different curricular area: one set of stairs with multiplication tables, one set with names of U.S. presidents, and another with award-winning book titles! As co-sponsor of Fine Arts Day, the art teacher collaborates with the music specialist to create a celebration of student work based on the theme of a particular country or culture.

Our guidance counselor meets with each homeroom at Jackson every week, in addition to holding individual private or small group sessions. Classes follow a character education curriculum, have lessons based on efficacy standards, and discuss long- and short-term goal setting. The counselor works closely with the RTI (Response to Intervention) team to monitor student progress and facilitate parent meetings in the areas of academics, behavior, and attendance. She and the principal lead monthly "Coffee with the Counselor" meetings for parents to discuss pertinent issues or areas of concern. The celebrations of Red Ribbon Week, Career Day, and Transition Day (a day in the life of the next grade) are under her leadership.

Jackson's P.E. teacher promotes healthy, lifetime habits through a combination of engaging physical exercises, instruction on personal health, and implementation of the family life curriculum. She maintains a safe environment that emphasizes cooperation, respect, and following instructions. Directing school sock hops and Field Day activities, she brings physical activity into our celebrations. Through the use of her classroom library and incorporation of numeracy, she also encourages the students to exercise their minds!

## 3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Jackson Elementary uses a variety of instructional methods and interventions throughout the school day. A typical day at Jackson begins with presenting students with flashcards to review math and science related content as they wait for breakfast to begin. During breakfast, the students are quizzed with content-area

questions. Then, they proceed to the computer lab to complete a session of tiered, computer-based, adaptive intervention for mathematics (I-Ready) or reading (I-Station). Tier 2 students complete 30 minutes, while Tier 3 students complete 45-minute sessions. This form of progress monitoring is pivotal in closing the achievement gap.

Once in the classroom, students complete their constructed tasks focusing on key subject areas. Recapping the tasks is a critical part of providing relevant feedback for each student. Each classroom teacher then transitions into an uninterrupted, 90-minute reading block. This block begins with a 25-45 minute whole group lesson with a focus on phonemic awareness, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Each lesson begins with the announcement of the objective and the statement of why the skill is important. Teachers provide explicit instruction through modeling. Educators consistently utilize the district-wide Comprehensive Literacy Improvement Plan (CLIP), a gradual release model, to scaffold student learning. While engaged in the guided and individual practice stages, students showcase their understanding through the use of the “I do, you do, and we do” strategy. Next, students participate in small, tiered groups, which lasts for 45-65 minutes. At this time, teachers differentiate instruction based on student needs classified as advanced/proficient, basic, and below basic.

Math and science lessons are taught with a high level of student engagement. Math lessons follow the gradual release process as well. Flexible grouping aids in making the necessary instructional adjustments to help students attain mastery. The small group setting affords teachers the opportunity to modify instruction, clarify misconceptions, and engage students in meaningful tasks that fit their needs. During planning time, student data is reviewed and analyzed as an integral part of an ongoing cycle to augment student progress and discuss best practices.

We affirm that following schedules and implementing routines maximizes instructional time. Even during restroom breaks, task cards reflecting math facts, sight words, academic vocabulary, and BrainQuest are utilized to review previously taught concepts. Hallway bulletin boards are Common Core driven and interactive. At the end of the day, teachers use various strategies to cement learning for the day. Examples of this include exit slips, take-aways, and tickets-out-the-door.

#### 4. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

Without exception, Jackson Elementary School significantly outperformed like populations statewide in every category and subject by more than 50% on the state’s Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP), a criterion-referenced assessment for reading/language arts (RLA), math, and science. Because of demographic and socioeconomic factors, our students were predicted to perform poorly. By defying the odds, our ELL and Hispanic subgroups have met and exceeded the state’s goal for their population. Moreover, we outpaced the general population in gap-closing achievement. Jackson has shown annual growth in state assessments by achieving a superior “Level 5” TVAAS score. Compared to the state, our ELL students more than doubled the level of proficiency by greater than two standard deviations in the areas of RLA and math, while the state made minimal growth in math only.

The use of assessments helps drive student learning. A language development and academic achievement assessment is given to ELLs. The English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers use scores from this test to determine the English language proficiency levels of students. ESL teachers immerse literacy and numeracy into all academic areas through our ESL program. Kindergarteners are evaluated using a school-based assessment to determine their entering levels for heterogeneous groupings. In grades one through five, students are identified through benchmarking with a variety of assessments including Discovery, I-Station, I-Ready, and a school-based “JCAP” assessment. During RTI and PLC meetings, educational decisions about the intensity and duration of interventions are identified based on individual student response to instruction. Decisions for integrated general and special education are made by the creation of a system of instruction and intervention guided by child outcome data. Teachers evaluate weekly RTI and anecdotal data to provide intervention aligned to each student’s needs. Using the principal-designed “Lesson Plan Feedback” form, the leader analyzes lesson plans to determine high-quality instruction. Then, she offers constructive comments to teachers, which guide weekly instruction.

Each student in our school has a data notebook that contains individual student's data including: scores from TCAP, I-Station, I-Ready, Discovery, and state writing test. Learners develop SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound) goals using data for individual improvement. Students create graphs that help them monitor their academic progress. Teachers regularly confer with students using their notebooks to discuss their present levels of performance. The data notebooks provide great evidence for review and allow scholars to take responsibility for their own learning.

The leadership team creates a calendar outlining the school-year events to celebrate the data explaining the implications of the results. At the genesis of the school year, Jackson's new parents are given an introduction to our school during an orientation session setting forth clear expectations and goals for all students and parents. Specialists share data specific to their content areas. Throughout the year, there are a plethora of opportunities to continue sharing results; for example, the Parent Informer Newsletter (bilingual), Grade Level Family Meetings, and Title I Parent Forum.

## **PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS**

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

At Jackson, we see school culture as one of the strongest indicators of our success. Our school climate supports creative student learning and the development of future citizens, which are essential elements for academic success and character building. The positive culture of our school doesn't just happen.

On the first day of school, the principal greets each student as they turn in their summer projects, capturing the moment with a photo. This project focuses on activities in all academic areas and serves as an introduction to the next grade level. Morning announcements include a moment of silence, daily information, school rules, and a teacher spotlight. The announcements conclude with the slogan, "Something good is going to happen at Jackson today!" Throughout the school year, students are engaged in activities that challenge them in making real-world connections. On Science Day and Career Day, experts share their knowledge through lectures and hands-on demonstrations. At quarterly Honors Programs, the chorus performs and honorees celebrate their accomplishments in academics, attendance, and behavior. Students proudly receive ribbons as they cross the stage. Afterwards, recipients wave their ribbons and celebrate with refreshments and a sock hop.

The halls of Jackson are adorned with creative student work, positive slogans/affirmations, school data graphics, as well as teacher and student spotlight boards. Rules and expectations are clearly defined using the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS) program. In order to promote awareness of the importance of coming to school, attendance is monitored and announced daily.

There are opportunities to support social, emotional, and academic growth throughout the year. An ice cream social, in conjunction with Character Day, welcomes students to another year. On this day, students come to school dressed as their favorite storybook character. Later in the day, students enjoy ice cream while mingling with peers. Local authors read and members of the symphony play simultaneously, sparking the imaginations of the listeners. The emotional growth of every scholar is supported by Kingian's Nonviolence, which is used to teach conflict resolution. Academic growth is enhanced through the TCAP pep rally allowing learners to express their school spirit. All classes have NFL-team names. Everyone wears team apparel and creates banners to show pride. This event is not limited to chants and cheers, but includes "jeopardy-style", content-specific questions and prizes. The school website (<http://www.scsk12.org/schools/jackson.es/site/index.shtml>) documents these and many more activities that are held throughout each year.

Our principal diligently prepares for a productive school year by mailing all teachers a summer newsletter with goals and expectations. She recommends professional development to keep teachers current in proven, effective, instructional practices. To support new teachers and those changing grade levels, opportunities are provided for peer observations. Teachers are rewarded for student achievement, perfect attendance, delivering professional development, and making positive contributions to the school environment. In-service training, faculty meetings, and PLCs address teacher needs and concerns.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Without a doubt, parental involvement + community participation = student achievement. Jackson employs several strategies ensuring that families and community members are involved in the development of student success and school improvement. Parent representatives participate in the school decision-making process as members of the School Based Decision Making Council (SBDMC). So that language is never a barrier, we offer English classes to our families, both through the school and a local church. We also have a bilingual mentor to translate when necessary.

Our counselor and principal host monthly parent meetings based on community needs. For example, immigrant families in the neighborhood are apprehensive about reporting crimes due to fear of deportation. To address this, we invite local police to discuss this process of reporting crimes. Other sessions focus on Internet safety, registering parents to be compliant with the Affordable Care Act, and where to receive free mammograms.

We have numerous events to celebrate the diversity of our community. The Hispanic Heritage Festival is a time for students and families to showcase their Latino cultures. Family and friends are invited to participate in the annual Vocabulary Parade Day. This event requires students to brainstorm a word, research the definition, and design a costume for the occasion. Stakeholders gather for Career Day to share numerous career options with students to prepare them for life after graduation. For Curiosity Day, community partners work collaboratively to provide activities that pique students' inquisitiveness using the scientific method. Muffins with Moms and Donuts with Dads are social breakfasts where parents, or other respective family members, eat and read with their children. Family Game Day is an engaging event that features problem-solving activities, whereby the children create strategies and work collaboratively with their peers and their families. Lastly, the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) sponsors Skate Night, an evening focused on the physical health of students, families, and staff members.

Community partners are consistently present at Jackson. A local church and a dentistry office unwaveringly provide the school with charitable donations including prizes, resources, and weekend care packages. We are partners with The Kitchen Community, which furnishes our school with a Learning Garden, as well as materials to guarantee its success.

Families are frequently invited to the school to gain an understanding of their child's curriculum. To bridge the home-school connection, educators plan simulated learning activities for parents and children to complete together. Teachers meet with parents to discuss each student's achievements and areas for growth by reviewing their child's data notebook.

### 3. Professional Development:

Jackson teachers participate in high-quality professional development activities at the school and district levels. Our professional development provides opportunities for team members to come together and communicate in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to one-on-one, small group dialogue, and whole group discussions. Teams are also able to share resources, strategies, and practices to best meet the diverse needs of our students. The instructional leader efficiently utilizes human, fiscal, material, and time resources. The principal galvanizes teachers' areas of strength through classroom observations, educational backgrounds, and interests to build an interconnected, coherent, system of professional development.

Professional development is determined in a variety of ways. Through surveys, educators have multiple opportunities to request assistance to meet instructional challenges. Moreover, our principal hones in on effective teaching practices worthy of being shared throughout the school. This practice was born out of a post-observational conference in which our principal voiced her enthusiasm for the brain-based learning approach witnessed in a fourth grade classroom. After encouraging this teacher to explain this instructional strategy to the faculty and witnessing its successful replication throughout the building, the principal continues to empower other teachers through her creation of the "Teacher Leader in Me" series. In preparation for the series, teachers research content-specific materials and present the information to the entire faculty. For instance, the ESL teacher presents strategies to integrate science into literacy and numeracy to overcome the challenges of closing the achievement gap. Additional in-house PD sessions address integrating literacy and math, as well as infusing writing with history.

RTI assists teachers in the identification of the individual learning needs of each student, using a tiered approach. To aid in this, our administrators provide in-house sessions to further clarify this process utilizing child-outcome data to create a well-integrated system of instruction. Examining Student Work is another session to help teachers determine if performance tasks are aligned to standards and provide rigor for the students. Technology Integration and Resources focuses on promoting student success in a computer-driven era to prepare them for the demands of a global-market economy.

Additionally, teachers participate in many district-led PD sessions such as Implementing the Common Core and The Comprehensive Literacy Improvement Plan (CLIP). These sessions build educators' capacity by providing innovative and varied practices needed in the classroom. Teachers gain expertise in educational techniques and influence student learning experiences that will prepare them for life after graduation.

Follow-up sessions are offered to increase teacher capacity and leadership ability. We also plan to continue to make use of technology for the enhancement of student instruction and achievement as well as utilize research-based instructional strategies along with the district's professional development activities that are aligned with academic standards to impact our students' achievement.

#### 4. School Leadership:

Leadership is an obvious strength of Jackson Elementary. The governance of our school has a strong working relationship with all stakeholders. Administrators embrace the diversity of the school population by creating an environment that promotes the philosophy of maintaining high academic achievement and by fostering the progression of character development. Led by the principal, our team of leaders consists of the PLC coach, SBDMC, Driving Force Team, and grade chairs. Together, they maintain effectiveness and efficiency at our school. Each person works collaboratively ensuring the organization runs smoothly.

Working side by side with all leadership groups, our principal shapes a vision of academic success for all students. She cultivates the advancement of our school by upholding high standards and rigorous learning goals. In order to accomplish this, the principal conducts evaluations, oversees the school curriculum, delivers small group tutoring, and affords opportunities for professional development. An example of this is the "Teacher Leader in Me" PD sessions. Designed to produce leaders within the building, these meetings provide an outlet for sharing best practices with colleagues. To further showcase her expertise of building excellent exemplars in the classroom, our principal has appointed a National Board Certified teacher to facilitate the school's "New Teacher Mentorship" program. With the intent of furthering the growth and success of students, our principal regularly collaborates with district officials and teachers, while galvanizing resources from the community.

Professional Learning Communities are critical to the operation of our school. The PLC Coach coordinates curriculum strategies utilized by teachers, conducts evaluations, develops the school's Title I budget, and leads weekly school-wide PLCs. She attends district level meetings to obtain information on curriculum and mandatory teacher-related tasks. Additionally, the PLC Coach disseminates needed materials to optimize classroom experiences.

The SBDMC meets on a monthly basis and is made up of the principal, PLC coach, PTO president, community stakeholders, and a teacher. This council makes decisions and discusses various school-based initiatives. In one specific instance, the team brainstorms ideas such as "No Uniform Day", for improving attendance. Incentivizing students who attend school regularly is one method for increasing student achievement and avoiding learning gaps.

The Driving Force Team is comprised of the principal, PLC coach, librarian, guidance counselor, and a teacher. This team finds favorable ways to strengthen the school-wide educational environment in order to improve achievement. Articles and books on topics such as text complexity, integrating science and literacy, as well as rigor are read and analyzed by the team to apply the best practices and implement Common Core State Standards.

Grade chairs work with the principal and teachers to help carry out the school's procedures and curriculum goals. They are responsible for conducting grade level meetings, submitting lesson plans, supporting fellow teachers, and disseminating information from administration to teachers.

## Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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Our successful practice has been the use of data. We evaluate students at the beginning of the year with a school-created formative assessment. Using Discovery, students are also tested three times during the year in reading, mathematics, and science so that we can better serve their academic needs.

Data is used in the evaluation of teachers and students. For teachers, their effectiveness is measured through observation and student performance. Even teachers' level of efficiency is given a numerical score one through five. This is conveyed to teachers in a principal/teacher conference.

Student data is examined when the principal leads us in Prescriptive Data sessions, which enable us to strategically disaggregate and utilize the statistics to drive our instruction. This process allows us to have an in-depth, skill-by-skill overview on the specific academic needs of each student. Metaphorically, we view ourselves as “the academic doctors and nurses” of our students. We dress in medical attire and diagnose our students' needs according to their current health condition. We prescribe a course of treatment for each patient needing supplemental instruction in a deficit area. From assessment results, we create a chart of students in stable health projected to score proficient or advanced on the statewide assessment. Thus, we develop our Guaranteed Wellness Plan based on instructional needs, which allows teachers to monitor, track, and evaluate the students' prognoses. We also recognize areas of gain for patients in excellent health. Because we want all of our patients to have a clean bill of health, we examine the treatments used and provide enrichment. This precise course of treatment impacts student achievement because each student has his or her own prescription.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results reveal that Tennessee is the fastest improving state in the nation. We are proud to contribute to this by maintaining a “Level 5” superior rating on TVAAS. Also, Jackson's attendance data shows the direct correlation between consistent attendance and student achievement. Our yearly attendance rate of 94% has assisted in high-end results. Notably, we have demonstrated a meritorious level of achievement, garnering us the distinction of Tennessee Reward School in 2012. According to state test results, our ELL and Hispanic students' assessment scores have significantly increased, setting the stage for our school to be nominated for the National Blue Ribbon Award as an Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing School.